

## SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS  
UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY  
DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

## CAVALCADE CHRISTIANS.

From the N. Y. World.

Our Washington correspondents inform us that a great sensation has been created in that city during the past week by the appearance in its streets and avenues of an indefinite number of young Christians. These young Christians have entertained the capital with processions, songs, and hymns, and one is left a little in doubt whether the extreme excitement caused by their presence and their performances is to be attributed to their musical gifts, to their good looks, to their excellent drill in marching, or merely to the fact of their being Christians. When we consider the average tone of Washington morals and religion, it will seem to be reasonable enough that the spectacle of a procession of young Christians should appear to that city a more novel and amazing show even than Mr. Burleigh with his bearded Chinese, or the unbelieving "Japs," or the idolatrous Indians from our far Western frontier.

Why young Christians, however, should feel themselves called upon, not in their capacity as citizens, but in their quality of young Christians, to march in military procession through the streets of the Federal capital singing the "Star-Spangled Banner," is really, when one comes to reflect upon it, much more of a puzzle than why the people of Washington should leave their homes and hearths and run into the streets to look at them. For all references which we can at this moment recall from the Christian Scriptures to any connection between Christian believers and the streets of a city is an injunction laid upon His disciples by the founder of Christianity that whenever they desired to pray they should take particular care to avoid following the example of the Pharisees, who had a way of saying their prayers standing "at the corners of the streets that they might be seen of men." This injunction, if it was not disobeyed to the letter by the young Christians at Washington, certainly was not kept by them in the spirit. They can hardly have imagined, when they marshalled their array in Pennsylvania avenue and set forth with shouts and lights for the White House like a political delegation, or a target company, or a "grand army of the republic," that they were likely to pass unnoticed of men; and it is just possible that when they lifted up their voices in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" under the Presidential roof they were not wholly exalted out of all consciousness that mortal ears, and those of high degree, were listening to their well-modulated strains. All this would be harmless enough in its absurdity if these "Christian young men" professing to regard their Christianity as Freemasonry, or "Knights Templar" their knighthood, as a special mystery and bond, that is, of their own by virtue of which they became a brotherhood apart from other uninitiated men, and are called upon by virtue of that brotherhood from time to time to dine and "processionize" and make excursions together. In that case, however much they might bore the population by singing in the streets at untimely hours, or turning the tide of travel out of the highways into shoals and eddies, no permanent scandal would flow from the temporary annoyance. But we understand Christianity to be the general religion of the land, and those young men to have associated themselves together for the purpose of setting forth the peculiar merits and influences of Christianity in an exemplary and superior manner. This they certainly are not in a way to achieve by imitating the suspiciously vainglorious and self-conscious fashions of merely worldly brotherhoods, by seeking notoriety in the highway and by subjecting the President of the United States to an hour or two of hand-shaking to the tune of very slow music, with General Howard standing by as chief executioner.

The Scripture, it is true, enjoins Christians to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." But the Constitution nowhere provides that the President shall have his hand shaken in his own house by a thousand excursionists, nor yet that he shall be entitled to demand hymns and psalms as tribute from all Christian young men who chance to pass through Washington. If these religious exercises were devotionally and devoutly performed, and not under Caesar, but unto God, if they were not devotionally it would not be civil for us to say precisely what they were.

FROM THE N. Y. TRIBUNE.

The despatches which we publish announce the entire defeat of the Paris insurgents. M. Thiers and his troops are in possession of so much of the city as still remains, and if any struggles continue they are the hopeless efforts of a few hundred Communists barricaded in a corner, to whom despair has lent a hideous sort of courage. There can be no doubt that the Commune, as a military or political force, has ceased to exist. Possibly it is too soon to sum up its record or write its epitaph, but it is difficult to believe that the remotest age will remember it without a shudder, or the most impartial historian modify the passionate condemnation which all the world has already pronounced on its acts. Mr. Frederic Harrison, in the *Fortnightly Review*, is, we believe, the only known writer who has found an explanation for the Commune, or discovered any method in its madness. But the dreadful work of the last week destroyed the only value which might have belonged to the passionate rhapsody of the Positivists. The better the idea out of which the Commune sprang, the worse for the world. An idea that has found exponents like Piat and Rigault, and that enlisted Dombrowski and Cluseret in its defense, has little chance of being accepted hereafter by honest men. Paris had a right to municipal self-government, no doubt, but the only possible apology for the imperial oppression against which the great city protested, has been supplied by the machine who made her the owner of liberty. The social questions which the Commune sought to raise have been pressing for a settlement for years past. They never had so good a chance for fair consideration as within the past twelve months. It is probable that the Commune has postponed them for half a century. Social reorganizations have come before now through convulsions and great agonies, but they come in spite of disorders, and not by help of them. The September massacres made republicanism impossible in France. The barbarities of the Commune have undone the work of a score of reformers, and closed the ear of Europe to every demand for social readjustments. If the overthrow of the Vendome column was meant as a protest against the military spirit,

in behalf of what new doctrine of good-will to the charred ruins of Paris plead?

But the death of the Commune is only the beginning of the end. M. Thiers is master of Paris to-day, and being master, his difficulties are still all before him. The Versailles Government has never been popular even with the Parisians to whom the Commune was most odious. Before it quitted Bordeaux, it had contrived to outrage the sensibilities of the vainest population in the world. Every shopkeeper on the Boulevards felt himself humiliated at being governed from a provincial city, and the vote of the Assembly to adjourn to Versailles instead of Paris was resented as a wanton affront. For all this M. Thiers was held responsible. He had not been thoroughly popular in Paris even when Paris chose him as one of her deputies in the Corps Legislatif. It was not Thiers whom they loved, so much as Napoleon whom they hated, and in the same way it was the fierce hostility of Paris to the rulers who surrendered the city to the Prussians that led them to welcome any successors. When the Executive whom the Bordeaux Assembly had chosen had established itself in the capital, Paris all at once found itself divided into two hostile camps. Paris in rage set swelling in the Buttes Montmartre, while Paris in broadcloth implored M. Thiers either to govern or give way to somebody who would. He did neither. The insurgents might have been dispersed without difficulty during the first week or fortnight. They might have been beaten even after a month's delay, had M. Thiers known how to attach his own troops to him, or had Vinoy shown ordinary skill in planning his movement. The double failure drove the Thiers government to Versailles, followed by the hisses of the Parisians who could not run. Then came that long period of inaction, and that weary show of incapacity and fear, while the insurrection grew daily stronger, while the Commune organized itself and entrenched the city, and throughout which the contempt of the Parisians for M. Thiers darkened day by day into hate. His bombardment of the city followed, and Paris saw with indignation her lawful rulers battering down what her enemies had spared. From the day when the shells began falling about the Arc de Triomphe, the anger against M. Thiers was as strong among his old partisans as among his old opponents. What must it be to-day, when the city lies in ruins solely because the chief who ought to have saved her was unequal to the work?

That is the immediate difficulty of the situation. It is not possible to believe that M. Thiers can long continue at the head of this Government. It is equally difficult to name a successor under whom the Government could be carried on in its present shape.

If we are to regard the existing Government as permanent in form, we shall look about in vain for an executive whose claims to popular confidence could inspire any hope of success. To put a weak man or an unknown man in M. Thiers' place is to encourage the intrigues of Orleansists, of Bourbons, and of Imperialists alike. There are no means of forming an opinion on the probable chances of either, nor is it certain that society may not find a savior who should prove neither an imbecile nor a tyrant. But he must be a sanguine man indeed who can discover in the circumstances of to-day much ground for believing that the republic is likely to prove stronger than all its opponents together.

## THE LATEST COAL MINE HORROR.

From the N. Y. Herald.

On Saturday last Pittston, Pa., was the scene of a calamity similar to that which visited Avondale in the autumn of 1869. The shaft of one of the mines took fire, and as it was the only means of ingress and egress all the workmen in the mine were completely shut out from escape. Fortunately the number of men thus trapped was not as great as at Avondale, where one hundred human beings fell victims to the careless, inhumanity, or what is most likely, avarice of the mining companies. At Pittston only thirty-seven men were entombed, of whom eighteen were taken out dead and the others alive, though insensible. It is feared that the recovery of several of the latter is impossible.

One would have thought that after the terrible catastrophe at Avondale precautions would have been taken at once against its occurrence in other mines. The fact that the number of victims in the Pittston mine is only eighteen does not make their fate less horrible to contemplate. Two years ago we called the attention of the mining companies to the necessity of providing all their mines with more than one shaft, so that the workmen would be not only secured against death from sudden and unforeseen occurrences, but that they would be all provided with a strong, health-preserving current of pure air, so much needed in all mines. It is evident from the tragedy at Pittston that there has not been any improvement in this direction. The mine in which the thirty-seven men were immured has but a single shaft; that shaft took fire, and instantly every soul in the depths below was as much cut off from escape as are any of the souls we read of in Dante's "Inferno." Not long ago the same shaft caught fire, and, says the report, "has not been considered entirely safe in its working-gear for some time." Nevertheless, on Thursday last, a mine inspector investigated its condition "and reported everything satisfactory." But, as events have proven, everything was not satisfactory. In the first place, there was danger of the shaft taking fire, and, in the next, the company was deliberately violating the law, which forbids the employment, at one time, of more than twenty men in a mine which has but one means of retreat. Furthermore, there was next to nothing at hand to extinguish a fire in the event of one occurring. When the shaft at Pittston was in flames on Saturday a miserable well was the only source from which water could be obtained, and as its supply was insufficient recourse was had to the river, half a mile distant. In short, every fact developed by the tragedy strengthens the evidence of the criminal negligence of the company in the matter of providing against fires.

A witty Englishman has observed that for a people who make it a constant boast that they possess more freedom than any other nation on earth, Americans submit to an amount of tyranny from corporate bodies that would provoke a revolution in Europe. The truth of this assertion is to be seen in this latest coal mine horror. So far as we are aware the Avondale tragedy had not the slightest effect upon the corporations which own the Pennsylvania mines. Although the expense of constructing additional air passages and means of escape from death is comparatively trifling, nothing seems to have been done. Our correspondent in Pittston reports the excitement as intense at that place, and well it may be. The sudden stifling to death of eighteen husbands and fathers is a catastrophe horrible enough to excite one, particularly where the tragedy could

and should have been prevented by the simplest and least expensive of precautions. It is not long since the monopolists who own the mines crushed all resistance out of the miners and compelled them to return to work on their own terms. During the long and weary strike, of which a surrender was the result, the companies appealed to the public for support, alleging that their expenses forbade their paying the wages demanded. If these expenses include life-saving appliances, we should like to know what amount was expended for the purpose. It is the duty of every corporation to adopt all reasonable precautions for saving the lives of its employees. In the Pittston mine there was no precaution whatever taken. That we trust it will influence the Pennsylvania Legislature to enact a law compelling the monopolists to provide additional shafts to every mine which at present has only one, and forbidding under heavy penalty the working of any mine as dangerous to human life as that at Pittston. A law of this kind is necessary to prevent the recurrence of just such horrors as the one reported.

It is, perhaps, too much to hope that the Pittston tragedy, following within two years after that at Avondale, will bring the coal companies to a proper sense of the duty they owe to the miners. But we trust it will influence the Pennsylvania Legislature to enact a law compelling the monopolists to provide additional shafts to every mine which at present has only one, and forbidding under heavy penalty the working of any mine as dangerous to human life as that at Pittston. A law of this kind is necessary to prevent the recurrence of just such horrors as the one reported.

## THE TREATY WITH AMERICA.

From the London Saturday Review.

The President of the United States, having previously summoned an extraordinary session of the Joint Commission, is now able to submit to the Senate the treaty which has been concluded. It proves to be an absolute surrender of every point for which successive English Governments have contended. It commences with the humble apology which was demanded in vain by Mr. Sumner and Mr. Fish; and the English commissioners, as if for the express purpose of humiliating their country, have committed the blunder of declaring that the law which they recognize for the purpose of compensation was not in force when the supposed liability was incurred. A penalty inflicted for the breach of a legal obligation would have been comparatively endurable. The excuse for their inconsistency is founded on the professed desire of the English Government to cultivate friendly relations with the United States. A thinner veil could not have been woven to disguise the true motive of unqualified submission. It is not easy to understand the imminence of the danger which seems to have frightened the commissioners. At the worst the American Government could only have threatened a hazy invasion of Canada; and it is not likely that such a move would be used to accelerate the negotiation. If any patriotic American desires fully to appreciate the triumph of his country, he has only to contrast the treaty with the despatches of Lord Russell and Lord Clarendon, and above all with Mr. Bernard's excellent treatise, which from this time is obsolete. It is not surprising either that Mr. Sumner expresses general satisfaction with the treaty, or that he thinks it practicable to inflict on England the additional affront of making the arbitration exclusively one-sided. Perhaps the more generous souls of his countrymen will be satisfied with the ample revenge which they have secured for all real and imaginary offenses.

As the removal of Mr. Sumner from the office of Chairman of Foreign Relations proves that the President is supported by a majority in the Senate, there is every reason to believe that the convention will be ratified. Circumstances have changed since the vexatious rejection of Mr. Beveridge's Johnson's treaty. In 1893, when Mr. Seward showed the profound unpopularity of Mr. Andrew Johnson, chronic ill-will to England was stimulated by unwillingness to allow the outgoing administration the credit of effecting a settlement of the dispute. General Grant and Mr. Hamilton Fish have on more than one occasion displayed an exacting and unfriendly spirit in dealing with the Alabama controversy; but their late proceedings seem to prove that they have the good sense to prefer a substantial victory to any political advantage which they might secure by keeping the quarrel open. As the English Commissioners consented to surrender the main point in dispute, the President's Government can scarcely be blamed for adopting their decision. In the arrangement of a compromise or of a submission, the party who is less eager for an adjustment enjoys an undoubted superiority. In the United States the possibility of a rupture with England involved a mere disturbance of commercial credit; and in popular estimation the inconvenience was overbalanced by the hope that war might result in territorial aggrandizement. Englishmen, on the other hand, have cultivated for many years a genuine love of peace which is neither shared nor understood by any other civilized community; nor could they be forgiven the struggle in Canada would have been conducted under the most unfavorable conditions. There was nothing to gain and much to lose in a conflict with the United States; and the hostile feeling which so largely affects American politics has never been reciprocated in England. The great majority of the people, having neither leisure nor inclination for the study of questions of international law, have probably received a vague impression that the persistent complaints of American speakers and writers must have had more or less foundation; and the present Government is not especially susceptible on delicate points of honor. Mr. Gladstone has since the final overthrow of the Southern Confederacy, felt and expressed the deepest remorse for the sympathy with which he regarded their heroic efforts when they seemed likely to win. Lord Stanley and Lord Clarendon have, by their large concessions to the exigency of Mr. Seward and Mr. Beveridge Johnson, prepared general opinion for the ultimate prevalence of the American demands.

The additional quarrel with respect to the fisheries, which has recently been fastened on England and Canada, unexpectedly gave an opening for fresh negotiations with the latter. To Sir Edward Thornton's proposal of a commission on the fishery question, the Secretary of State replied by a suggestion that the same machinery should be used to prepare the way for a settlement of the still more serious dispute. When England was a self-asserting and perhaps a pugnacious power, the overture would not have been readily accepted. It was known from Mr. Fish's notorious despatch to Lord Clarendon, and from the President's last message to Congress, that the American Government had extended even to the limits which were defined by Mr. Sumner, but the Ministers probably only wished to find a decent excuse for giving way, and a commission might be supposed to give

a kind of judicial color to a predetermined surrender. Like the conference of three months ago, the commissioners met without any foregone conclusion, but with a result which might be easily foreseen, as it was involved in the terms of their appointment. There could be no objection to their concurrence in a prospective alteration of international law. Times and circumstances have changed; and it may perhaps be expedient to impose on neutrals a further restriction in their dealings with belligerents. Many politicians hold that the prohibition of the equipment of vessels which may afterwards be armed as cruisers would be highly valuable if England were principal in a maritime war. It is agreed on all hands that, according to the existing law, an armed vessel fit for service cannot be lawfully allowed to issue from a neutral port; and throughout the Alabama controversy the English Government admitted, perhaps with an excess of candor, that on sufficient evidence the ship might have been prevented from leaving the Mersey. The subsequent judgment of the Court of Exchequer threw a doubt on the soundness of the opinions of Lord Russell's law advisers; but the Americans may fairly rely in argument on the virtual acknowledgment of the legitimacy of their protests. In his long correspondence with Mr. Adams Lord Russell clearly proved that according to European and American precedents the English Government was not responsible for the escape of the Alabama, but it was impossible to fall back on a position which had been abandoned by his successors at the Foreign Office.

The sting of the convention, apart from considerations of national honor and self-respect, lies in the retrospective effect which is given to the new provision of international law. There is much of opinion as to the soundness of the policy embodied in the Declaration of Paris; and it has been contended that the maritime power of England is diminished by the rule that free bottoms make free goods; but it has never been alleged that the declaration involved any compromise of national dignity. If the old rule had been enforced during the Crimean war, a demand that enemy's goods captured in neutral vessels should be restored would have been summarily rejected. The deliberate change of the law implied that the right of capture existed up to the date of the declaration. It appears that the commissioners, having agreed on a certain proposition of law, have further provided that the Alabama question shall be determined in conformity with the new enactment. It would have been a simpler course to state that the conduct of the English Government in the Alabama case was a breach of international law; but the English commissioners may be excused for preferring a form of expression which partially veils the real character of their decision. The machinery which they have provided for determining the claims is highly devious, and even ornamental. It is perhaps pleasant to be fined by a Court of Kings and Presidents of Republics than by a vulgar board of arbitrators. It is not known whether the Emperor of Brazil can command the services of accomplished jurists among his own subjects; but there can be no doubt that the Governments which have been selected to give dignity to the arrangement will take care that they are respectably represented at Washington. A difficulty arising from the possible refusal of the House of Representatives to vote any money which may be required may perhaps cause future complications.

The second convention is properly made subject to the ratification of the Canadian Parliament, as well as of the Imperial Government; but it may be supposed that Sir John Macdonald represents the feeling and opinions of his fellow colonists. In this case also the Government of the United States has succeeded in its main contention. Americans are henceforth to be allowed an equal right in the Canadian fisheries, and the inhabitants of the Dominion are on their side admitted to a share in the fisheries in the Northeastern States. As the reciprocal privileges are confessedly of unequal value, the American Government is to pay to Canada a sum to be determined by arbitration; and it may be hoped that the Canadian Parliament will apply the amount in some form to the benefit of the districts which are immediately interested in the fisheries. The dispute which is now to be settled in favor of the Americans dates from the close of the war of 1812, which had terminated the rights of fishing enjoyed before the Revolution and preserved by the treaty of 1783. In the late negotiations the Americans have contended that their vested interest in the fisheries was not a mere matter of contract, but rather a property analogous to territorial ownership; but it seems clear that a covenant is merely a covenant, and not by the treaty of 1812, which the right of fishing was conceded as part of an arrangement for commercial intercourse, the claim of a prior right was virtually abandoned. As the Canadians have borne with the interference of the American fishermen during the greater part of the interval since the establishment of the republic, there is no reason to suppose that they will suffer any intolerable hardship. The maintenance of the exclusive right to the fisheries might possibly have been useful as an equivalent to be conceded for some future commercial concession; but there can be no doubt that American legislation is tending in the direction of free-trade, and that the former intercourse will be revived, not as an act of liberality, but for the obvious benefit of the United States. The arrangements for settling the San Juan dispute, which has been revived by the American Government, are not yet known. An open arbitration would be the most satisfactory method of securing, in one instance at least, the interest and honor of England.

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